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A New Race of the Desert Lark from Egypt

by DR. L. HORVÁTH

Received 12th March, 1958

Ammomanes deserti borosi subsp. nov.

Description: A conspicuously greybacked Desert Lark, not brown-grey, like the nominate form. Whole upper-parts, including scapulars and all

the wing-coverts, light mouse-grey, without any trace of yellowish-brown grey colour. It is very distinct from the series of the nominate form collected by myself at Asswan and the series of *A. d. isabellina* Temminck I have collected between Suez and Cairo. Reddish-brown fringes to primaries and tail-feathers are darker and duller in a great extent, not yellowish, like the nominate form. Under-parts are the same as in the nominate form. Bill is deeper especially the lower mandible; it on the whole is more curved than in



ssp. n.



isabellina



deserti

Bills of Desert Larks

the nominate or *isabellina* forms, especially the tip of the upper mandible. It is interesting to note that the distance between the tip and the junction of the two halves of the lower jaw is 1-2 mm. shorter than in *Ammomanes deserti deserti* or *A. d. isabellina*. (See figures).

Distribution: Only known from the agriculturally cultivated oasis. Bir Abbad, in the Arab Desert 20 kilometers from the Nile about on the 25° N. latitude, Egypt.

Type: In the Hungarian National Museum of Natural History, register number 58.150.1. An adult female collected on an oasis, Bir Abbad, in

the Arab Desert 20 kilometers east from the Nile about on the 25° N., Egypt, by Dr. L. Horváth, on 29th October, 1957. The type locality is 25° 02' N., 33° 04' E. Measurements: wing, 106 mm.; tail, 68 mm.; tarsus, 24 mm.; bill from skull, 13 mm.

Remarks: The deeper and more curved, that is, stronger bill and the grey colour of the upper-parts refer to the effects of its environment. The soil of its habitat is more solid and the colour of the oozy soil of the oasis where it lives is grey.

I have pleasure in naming this new Desert Lark *Ammomanes deserti borosi* in honour of Dr. I. Boros, herpetologist, Chief-Director of the Hungarian National Museum in recognition of his kindness to appointing me as a member of the Museum's first expedition to Africa.

Two New Races of Larks from the Bechuanaland Protectorate

by MISS MARY L. PATERSON

Received 4th April, 1958

Certhilauda albofasciata bathoeni: New race

Discription: Compared with *C. a. kalahariae* O. -Grant, overall more rufous, the edges of feathers of the back, the secondaries and wing coverts buffy, not greyish white. The breast and belly deeper rufous, the ear coverts darker, the dark centres of the feathers of the back less distinct, merging more into the general rufous colour. Much lighter in all above respects than *C. a. baddleyi* from Kanye.

Type: An adult male N.M.31035 from 57 miles east of Kakia, B.P. 24°16'S: 23°24'E. C. S. Barlow, 1957 Expedition. 15.6.57. Taken on open burnt grassland on red kalahari sand. Gonads enlarged, coming up to breed.

Measurements: A series of 6 males and 8 females. Males W.88-94. Av. 91.7; Females W. 81-84 Av. 82.8.

Distribution: Only so far known from a belt of open grassland from some 50 to 75 miles east of Kakia on the Kanye road merging into *kalahariae* westwards between Kakia and 50 miles east of Kakia, there being a break in distribution eastwards owing to a wide belt of unsuitable country west of Kanye where on suitable ground *C. a. baddleyi* occurs. There are also two specimens in the British Museum (Natural History) collected on grassland, 32 miles north of Fort Rietfontein which agree with topotypical *C. a. bathoeni* whereas the "Pan" birds from Fort Rietfontein are *C. a. kalahariae*. Mrs. B. P. Hall of the British Museum (Natural History) who kindly examined these birds for me suggests that the range of *C. a. bathoeni* is probably fairly wide in the Kalahari where suitable grasslands are found and that it is ecologically but not necessarily geographically separated from the "Pan" race.

Unlike *C. a. kalahariae* which was closely associated with the salty pans characteristic of the area west of Kakia, this race occurred in the more open patches of grassland with grass up to 3ft. high.

Remarks: Named after the Paramount Chief of the Banwaketse, Bathoen II, O.B.E., who kindly granted permission for the expedition to operate in his Territory.